IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 3, 4, 14, and 15 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please amend Claims 1, 5, 6, 12, 16, 17, and 23 as follows.

1.   (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus, comprising:

image-data input means for inputting image data;

specific-image determination means for determining whether the image data input by said image-data input means represents a specific image having predetermined characteristics;

re-input determination means for determining whether to output a signal urging re-input of the image data input by said image-data input means, said re-input determination means including difficulty determination means for determining whether the determination by said specific-image determination means is difficult, wherein said re-input determination means determines whether to output the signal urging re-input of the image data based on the determination by said difficulty determination means; in accordance with a difficulty of determining whether the image data represents a specific image; and

signal output means for outputting the signal urging re-input of the image data, in accordance with a result of the determination by said re-input determination means.

2.   (Previously Presented) An image processing apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said specific-image determination means determines whether the image data represents a copy-prohibited image.

3. - 4. (Cancelled)

5.   (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said re-input determination means further comprises difficulty calculation means for calculating a difficulty in the determination of whether the image data represents the specific image, and said difficulty determination means determines for determining whether the determination by said specific-image determination means is difficult based on the difficulty calculated by said difficulty calculation means.

6.   (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus according to Claim 2 1, wherein said re-input determination means further comprises difficulty calculation means for calculating a difficulty in the determination of whether the image data represents a copy-prohibited image, and said difficulty determination means determines for determining whether the determination by said specific-image determination means is difficult based on the difficulty calculated by said difficulty calculation means.

7.   (Previously Presented) An image processing apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said re-input determination means determines whether re-input of the image data is to be urged from data based on a position of an original in an image represented by the input image data.

8.   (Previously Presented) An image processing apparatus according to Claim 5, wherein said difficulty calculation means calculates the difficulty in the determination of the specific image from data based on a position of an original in an image represented by the input image data, and wherein said difficulty determination means determines whether the determination by said specific-image determination means is difficult by comparing data of the difficulty calculated by said difficulty calculation means with a predetermined value.

9.   (Previously Presented) An image processing apparatus according to Claim 6, wherein said difficulty calculation means calculates the difficulty in the determination of a copy-prohibited image from data based on a position of an original in an image represented by the input image data, and wherein said difficulty determination means determines whether the determination of a copy-prohibited image is difficult by comparing data of the difficulty calculated by said difficulty calculation means with a predetermined value.

10.   (Previously Presented) An image processing apparatus according to Claim 8, wherein data of the difficulty calculated by said difficulty calculation means comprises an angle

of the original with respect to a scanning direction of the image represented by the input image data.

11.   (Previously Presented) An image processing apparatus according to Claim 8, wherein data of the difficulty calculated by said difficulty calculation means comprises a deviation of the original from a predetermined position with respect to a scanning direction of the image represented by the input image data.

12.   (Currently Amended) A method for controlling an image processing apparatus, said method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

an inputting step of inputting image data;

a specific-image determining step of determining whether the image data input in said image-data input step represents a specific image having predetermined characteristics;

a re-input determining step of determining whether to output a signal urging re-input of the image data input in said image-data input step, said re-input determining step including a difficulty determining step of determining whether the specific-image determining step is difficult, wherein said re-input determining step determines whether to output the signal urging re-input of the image data based on the determination in said difficulty determining step; ~~in accordance with a difficulty of determining whether the image data represents a specific image;~~ and

an outputting step of outputting the signal urging re-input of the image data, in accordance with a result of the determination in said re-input determining step.

13. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 12, wherein in said specific-image determining step, it is determined whether the image data input in said image-data input step represents a copy-prohibited image.

14. - 15. (Cancelled)

16. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim 12, wherein said re-input determining step further comprises a difficulty calculation step of calculating a difficulty in the determination in said specific-image determining step, and [[a]] said difficulty determination step of determining step determines whether the determination in said specific-image determining step is difficult based on the difficulty calculated in said difficulty calculation step.

17. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim ~~13~~ 12, wherein said re-input determining step further comprises a difficulty calculation step of calculating a difficulty in determining whether the image data represents a copy-prohibited image, and [[a]] said difficulty determination step of determining step determines whether the determination of whether the image data represents a copy-prohibited image is difficult [[,]] based on the difficulty calculated in said difficulty calculation step.

18.   (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 13, wherein in said re-input determining step, it is determined whether the re-input is to be urged from data based on a position of an original in an image represented by the input image data.

19.   (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 16, wherein in said difficulty calculation step, the difficulty in the determination of the specific image is calculated from data based on a position of an original in an image represented by the input image data, and wherein in said difficulty determination step, it is determined whether the determination of the specific image is difficult by comparing data of the difficulty calculated in said difficulty calculation step with a predetermined value.

20.   (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 17, wherein in said difficulty calculation step, the difficulty in the determination of a copy-prohibited image is calculated from data based on a position of an original in an image represented by the input image data, and wherein in said difficulty determination step, it is determined whether the determination of a copy-prohibited image is difficult by comparing data of the difficulty calculated in said difficulty calculation step with a predetermined value.

21.   (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 19, wherein data of the difficulty calculated in said difficulty calculation step comprises an angle of the original with respect to a scanning direction of the image represented by the input image data.

22.   (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 19, wherein data of the difficulty calculated in said difficulty calculation step comprises a deviation of the original from a predetermined position with respect to a scanning direction of the image represented by the input image data.

23.   (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium, capable of being read by a computer, storing a program to cause an image processing apparatus to execute the steps of comprising:

an inputting step of inputting image data;

a specific-image determining step of determining whether the image data input in said image-data input step represents a specific image having predetermined characteristics;

a re-input determining step of determining whether to output a signal urging re-input of the image data input in said image-data input step, said re-input determining step including a difficulty determining step of determining whether the specific-image determining step is difficult, wherein said re-input determining step determines whether to output the signal urging re-input of the image data based on the determination in said difficulty determining step; in accordance with a difficulty of determining whether the image data represents a specific image; and

an outputting step of outputting the signal urging re-input of the image data, in accordance with a result of the determination in said re-input determining step.